

wherein activation of reporter construct transcription indicates that said oxysterol activates LXR $\alpha$  mediated transcription.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein said oxysterol is a derivative of 22(R)-hydroxycholesterol, 20(S)-hydroxycholesterol, 24-hydroxycholesterol, 25-hydroxycholesterol, 7 $\alpha$ -hydroxycholesterol or FF-MAS (follicular fluid meiosis activating substance).

23. The method of claim 22, wherein said derivative is hydroxylated on one or more carbon atoms in the cholesterol backbone of said oxysterol, selected from carbon atoms numbered 4, 7, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26 or 27 (FIG. 2B).--

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## REMARKS

### **I. Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-16 were filed in the application. Claims 9-16 are cancelled herein as drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 8 are amended herein. New claims 17-23 are added herein. Claims 1-8 and 17-23 are presently pending. A copy of the pending claims, as amended, is attached as Exhibit A for the convenience of the examiner.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found in the specification at least at pg. 1, lines 21-26; pg. 2, lines 12-19; pg. 4, lines 8-13; pg. 4, line 19 - pg. 5, line 2; pg. 6, line 8 - pg. 8, line 25; pg. 9, line 23 - pg. 10, line 22; pg. 12, line 12 - pg. 13, line 2; Examples 1-6 and original claim 1. Claim 1 is amended to delete reference to the term "agonist" and to clarify that an "oxysterol activator" of LXR $\alpha$  mediated transcription refers to an oxysterol that can activate LXR $\alpha$  mediated transcription. Support for the amendment may be found in the Specification at least in the Summary of Invention, first paragraph, which refers to "a specific group of endogenous oxysterols that activate transcription through the nuclear receptor, LXR $\alpha$ ." Example

2 of the Specification refers to "Specific oxysterol activation of LXR $\alpha$ ." The last sentence of Example 2 states that, "only a specific group of oxysterols were observed to activate (5 to 15-fold) LXR $\alpha$  (FIG. 2A)." Example 3 of the Specification is entitled, "Structure-activity relationships of oxysterol activators of LXR $\alpha$  transcription."

Support for the amendment to claim 3 may be found in the specification at least at pg. 8, lines 8-14 and Examples 1-6.

Claims 4, 5, and 8 are amended to correct grammatical errors.

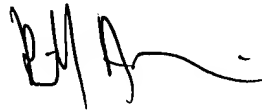
Claim 7 is amended to conform the language of the claim to the recitations of claim 1, from which claim 7 depends. Claim 1 does not recite a "means for" term. Claim 7 is amended to provide proper antecedent basis for the claim language.

Support for new claims 17 and 22 can be found in the specification at least at pg. 6, line 8 - pg. 7, line 13; pg. 11, lines 1-13 and Examples 1-6. Support for new claims 18 and 23 can be found in the specification at least at pg. 9, lines 23 - pg. 10, line 2; pg. 11, lines 1-13; Examples 1-6 and FIG. 2B. Support for new claim 19 can be found in the specification at least at pg. 7, lines 14-20; pg. 8, lines 13-25 and Examples 1-6. Support for new claims 20 and 21 can be found in the specification at least at pg. 4, line 23 - pg. 5, line 2; pg. 6, lines 8-21; pg. 11, line 14 - pg. 14, line 9; Examples 1-6 and original claim 1.

## II. Summary

Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance and an early indication to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should the examiner have any questions regarding this submission, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. A. Nakashima', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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